

AN
EXAMEN,
OF THE
PRETENCES
AND
CHARACTER
OF
Mr. WILLIAM RUSSEL

(The late *Portsmouth* Disputant) and Others.
Tendred to the Perusal and Considera-
tion of the Baptized Churches.

By an uninterested Person.

PROVERBS 24. 24, 25.

*He that saith unto the Wicked, thou art Righteous; him
shall the people Curse, Nations shall abhor him.
But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good
Blessing shall come upon them.*

L O N D O N:

Printed in the Year 1700.



T

F

A

bap

stori

anc

as

ran

den

M

T

ni

M

P

E

an

To the *Messengers*, *Elders* and
Brethren of all the Baptized
Congregations in *England*, a
Well-wisher to *Piety* and *Mo-*
deration, sendeth Greeting.

Honour'd Sirs,

AS *Dissemblitude* appears in the *Faces*
of all Men, difference and diversity
do in their *Minds*, and both, per-
haps, are the *Effects* of Original *Transgres-*
sion; I could not therefore presume to rectify
and reform so grand and radical a Disorder
as either of them; However, since *Tempe-*
rance is a *Christian's* Duty; Let your *Mo-*
deration saith the *Apostle*, be known to all
Men, Phil. iv. 5. and *Cicero* could tell us,
Temperentiam esse moderatricem om-
nium commotium; *Moderation* is the
Means of composing Disorders, I thought my
Pen could not be better imploy'd, than in
Essaying to moderate the *Spirits* of *Christi-*
an Brethren in their different *Sentiments* of

The Epistle Dedicatory.

some Matters of Religion, which, I take to have in them more of Theory and Speculation than Practice, and therefore to be of less Necessity.

The Life of Religion consisteth in the Practice of it, and of all the practical Parts due to our fellow Creatures, Charity ought to be eminently courted; The Apostle says, 'tis the Bond of Perfection, i. e. of Integrity and Uprightness; a Bond because 'tis Obligatory to, and certainly produceth and maintains mutual Love and Friendship among all the Faithful, so that, as a Tree is known by its Fruit, a Righteous Man is discover'd by his Actions, in whom Charity to be sure is always predominant; for it being the end of the Commandment, 1 Tim. 1. 5. all other Offices are comprehended in it, as Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing and forgiving on another, and consequently are diffused and made manifest to all Men, suitable to the discretion, capacity, and in every operation of the Subject.

These being the evident Marks of truly Charitable, and consequently of holy and upright Men, the contrary must needs be those

The Epistle Dedicatory.

of insincere and ungodly ; But I must not here anticipate the design and scope of the Paper it self, which, as I have already intimated, is to moderate Men's Heats and Prejudices, arising from their different Apprehensions, touching the Mysteries of Religion. And this I shall attempt two ways : First by assigning so many of my Reasons as the time limitted will permit to digest in any tolerable Measure, by which I think to make it appear, that the Errours charged upon Mr. M. C. are not so dangerous and destructive to Religion as his Adversaries insinuate ; nor so great, to merit Fire and Fagot, as some of the Party have affirmed, nor to be made the Bounds of Communion, not being simply pernicious to any part of Christianity, espceially the essentials of it, which is the principle Consideration. And then I shall endeavour to discover, and represent those Persons in their proper Colours, who have been the chief Fomenters of these unhappy Differences amongst the Brethren, and they being found to be some of the worst of Men, must needs be managed by other Designs than the Interest of Religion, tho' that be made their Pretence.

As

The Epistle Dedicatory.

As for the general Body of Protestors, I would fain know what they have to perswade an impartial enquirer, that the part of undersigning Persons was acted by them, who having mov'd, and brought it to the Vote, by which they promised to be determin'd, whether Mr. M. C's Notion, should be examin'd and brought upon Tryal, rent off, and drew up a Protestation against the general Assembly notwithstanding, because it passed in the Negative; I appeal to all unprejudicated Persons, whether these Measures lay not a Foundation to justify the greatest Disorder in the World.

And as for Mr. Russel, with what face can he pretend Religion in the Case, when it is well known he hath formerly professed to be of Mr. C's Opinion, or somewhat near it; and never made it a Crime till he was deny'd to officiate in the Pulpit, and then indeed for Revenge, I conclude, he fell in with the Protesting Party, and became all of a sudden one of the most zealous of the Party, which he had always opposed before; we have therefore just Reason to conclude he laid hold of that Difference as the fittest Handle to further and bring about

The Epistle Dedicatory.

about his aspiring and ambitious Designs by;
But suppose he hath really, not to say Consci-
enciously, changed his Opinion, it is not the
only alteration by several that he has made;
so that he had little reason to vent his Malice
against Mr. Collins of late, and cast Apostacy
into his Cup, when himself had so often, and
so deeply drank of the Liquor.

The due consideration of these Things, I
perswade my self will be sufficient Motives, for
down-right honest and truly Religious Persons,
who adhere to these Men, seriously to ponder
whether they are not imposed upon; and for
those that have not made themselves a Party,
to resent the fond partiality and disorder of
some of them, as well as the Designs and In-
treagues of others, according to thier desarts,
and merit of the Cause.

If any enquire wherefore the Author hath
concealed his Name, let them know, 'tis not
because he is asham'd of it; nor hath any per-
sonal grudge against the persons detected;
But being neither in a publick Capacity, nor
immediately concern'd in the Controversy, no
farther then as it is in general the Cause of
God, not being related in the Gospel to any
Church

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Church of the General Association, he was not ambitious to put his Name into Print.

'Tis not his Name, that is the thing to be enquired after, but the Question is whether what he hath writ be of Consideration ; The controvertal part is humbly tenderd by him to the Judgment of the more knowing ; And the Matters of Fact, with a multitude of other, will be proved upon Mr. Russel, by Members of several Congregations, dare he, or his Friends, either Legally, or before both Assemblies, call, and invite them to it.

A N
E X A M E N,
 O F T H E
Pretences and Character
 O F
 W I L L I A M R U S S E L and Others.

AMong all the *Confusions* of this present Age, *those* of the *Churches* are none of the least; their primitive Zeal, and pristine Purity seems to be wholly sunk into Faction, secular and carnal Interest, to the Great prejudice and scandal of Christianity; *Religion* now is generally mistaken, being taken to consist in airy Notions, and Speculations of the Brain, while the life, power and practice of Godliness is little regarded, even by such as pretend the most to it. *Curiosity* is the Religion in Fashion; they who abound with Novelty, and consume their time in diffusing their *own Idolized Fancies*, are the Persons and Parties chiefly courted, and best suit the humour of the Age we live in.

Never was the Talk of Religion more, nor the Living it less, in the World: *Saculum fertile religionis, sterile pietatis*. The greatest Smoak indeed is generally a sign of a small Fire, always of a crassulent, and both of the worst of Fuel; and as no Fire makes so huge a crackling, nor sends up so great a Flame, as that

B which

which hath Fuel the most sapless and dry ; so *These*, who are the most zealous in defence of *Punctilio's* in Religion are commonly the *worst* of *Men* ; for being ambitious of distinguishing *Characters* have no other *Qualifications* to recommend them, as for a *holy* and *pious Life*, *Righteousness*, and a peaceable Disposition, they are no parts of their *Controversy* ; If Men do but say with them, they may live so too, or e'n how they please, that's not worth their Inspection. *These* are the only Men, at least the most fiery and strenuous of them, that make unnecessary Explications of profound and sublime Mysterries, the bounds of Christian Communion ; as tho' a Man could not be a Christian, that hath, or hath not entred into the Disquisition of the Divine Nature, and thence is not able to say he conceives how three distinct Persons are, and subsist in one individual Essence ; and yet there are scarce any *Natural Phenomena's* in the material World, which themselves are able to resolve. They cannot tell us the connexion and cement of the several Particles of Matter ; nor inform us of the manner of the Heavenly Luminaries, subsisting without the supply of Fuel for so many Ages successively ; nor how the *Sun* annually returns without exceeding the Bounds of the *Tropicks*, whereby the World is preserved by its vital Heat ; and yet they pretend to discover how *three several and distinct Persons* are *essentially One* in the *Deity*. They are ignorant of the means whereby Substance supports its Accidents, but pretend to be *Doctors* in the manner of *Three Persons* subsisting in the *Divine Essence*, and so they must all be who aim at *Orthodoxy*, since that which is geuerally called so, consists in the Explication of the sacred Texts, and otherwise, he that barely believes their *Unity* is as *Orthodox* as they ; so that the Question now a days is not so much whether we are *Trinitarians*, as whether we hold that *Article* in the *Orthodox* Sense, *i. e.* in a certain received Explication.

plication. And hence it is, that instead of a Christian forbearance one with another in this Matter, a matter in which the whole Christian World is at odds, and cannot agree with it self, nothing but Gall and Bitterness appears in the Spirits of these Men we are speaking of, all are Anathematized by them, and damned to the Pit of Hell, that speak not the common Language, and run with the Current.

'Tis greatly to be lamented, so few are content with the *dimensum* God hath been pleased to afford, and so many touched with the Itch of Ambition, who are for doing something or other whereby they may be numbered, if not among the Wise and truly Pious, yet among the Scribes and Disputers of this World; that make it their Business to disturb the quiet and repose of the Churches, by sowing the Seeds of discord and fomenting differences in Mens apprehensions about the Misteries of Religion. But I think the designs of these Men would be greatly obstructed, would Christians confine themselves to the Expressions of Scripture, and speak of supernatural Things always in the Language of Divine Revelation: For there is great danger of being swallow'd up in the Ocean of Errour, to put to Sea in the Capacious Vessel of Explications, and the *Enemies of Christianity* as well as those of the *Blessed Trinity* have no greater Advantage against both, than from our own Broils and Dissentions; nor are they wanting to improve it.

But notwithstanding all this, I will not condemn for *Hereticks*, those of a contrary Mind, who are not content here, but proceed farther, and pretend to explicate the manner of the *Three Persons subsisting* in the *Godhead*, by which they fall into the exploded Errors of *Tritheism*, *Polytheism*, *Sabellianism*, &c. For these very Men explicitly own the same God that we do, the same Lord Jesus Christ, and the same Holy Spirit, tho' by their *Explications* of the *Blessed Trinity* they *Implicitly*

deny them ; For some of them make *several Gods*, others the three *Divine Persons* in the *Deity*, to be only *three Denominations, Modes or Relations*, whereby they infallibly demonstrate the thing to be a *Mystery*, and themselves but fallible Men.

From hence it is evident, we ought to distinguish betwixt an *Article of Faith*, and the manner of explaining it, so that a Man may quit his Explication, as Doctor South affirms, without parting with the *Article* it self, and consequently he may retain both the *Article* and Explication together. Let us put an Example in another Case. There is at this Day a very great contest among some learned and eminent Men, touching the human *Soul*, both Parties allow there is such a Thing in Man, but the Dispute is concerning the *Substance* of it, some of them will have it to be *Immaterial*, and consequently *Immortal* ; others *Material*, for say they, a material Substance by the *Omnipotency* of *God*, may have a Power of thinking superadded to it: No say the former, that destroys the very Notion of the *Soul*, both as to its Being, and *Immortality* ; for the Notion implies an immaterial and immortal Being. Whatever it implies say the latter, an erroneous Explication with respect to its Substance, does not destroy the Notion of the Souls Existence ; for neither doth its Being or Immortality consist in its Explication, this may be false and erroneous, when the Belief of the Thing it self ; and of its immortality may be real and *Orthodox*. For the Soul may both exist and be immortal, tho' it be not immaterial ; for *God*, say they, could as well make a thinking and immortal Substance of Matter, as he can change our gross and mortal Bodies into spiritual and immortal Substances.

Now let us apply this to the Case before us. Mr. M. C. is accused of *Heresy* by W. Russel and others, because he errs in his Explication of the Substance of our *Blessed Lord*. He professes he is not able to conceive

how

how it is possible for *Christ* to be *Essentially One* with the *Father* and *Holy Ghost*, and yet be *personally diversified* without *Individuation*, nor how he can be without *Sin* and participate of the *Human Substance*, which is all over tainted and polluted with *Sin*. But at the same time he expressly owns the personal Existence of *Christ*; for he firmly Believes that the Person which bears the appellation of *Jesus Christ* in the Holy Scripture, is really the *Son of God*, the *Creator* and *Saviour* of the *World*, nay that he participates both of the *divine* and *human Natures*.

But here I expect Mr. *M.C's* Adversaries will object, that for all *this* he expressly denys the *Trinity* in the *Orthodox Sense*, which is a *fundamental Article* of the *Christian Religion*, and therefore is an *Heretick*.

Suppose the Doctrine of the *Trinity* be a *fundamental Article* of *Faith*, yet the *fundamentum* doth not consist in the *Explication*, but in the *Reality* of the *Thing*, and consequently *Heresy* relates to the *Article it self*, and not to the *Explication*. So that the Question being; whether the *Doctrine* of the *Trinity* in the *Sense* commonly called *Orthodox* be a *fundamental* of the *Christian Religion*, I answer No; taking *Fundamentals* to be Points necessary to *Salvation*, or *Prejudicial* to a holy and spiritual Life; because that *Sense* is only of *Human Definition*, and not explicitly found in the *Scriptures*, which I conclude, do expressly contain all Things necessary to *Salvation*. The *Sum*, *Substance* and *Matter* of it indeed is sufficiently expressed in sacred *Writ*, so as no Man professing the veracity of the *Scripture* can deny it, viz. The *Unity* of the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, but it is no where expressly said in *Scripture*, that this *Unity* consists in the same *undivided*, and *Identical Essence*, and therefore it is no *Fundamental* part of our *Faith*. That the *Definition* of the *Church* is necessary to *Salvation* is an old *Relique* of the *Romish Church*, and in other Matters has been long since cashiered the *Protestant World*, and ought to

to be in this, the Reason of the Thing having this Foundation, that Men are to be their own Judges in Matters of Religion.

Suppose again it be a *fundamental Article*, yet it is not such a *fundamental One*, in which *Christianity is placed*: If it be, then those who by false and erroneous *Explications* run into *Tritheism, Polytheism, Sabellianism, &c. Unchristian* themselves; for implicitly they deny not only the *Doctrine* of the *Trinity*, but also the very *Being* of *God*. And those that through neglect or want of *Capacity* have not entred into the *disquisition* of the *Orthodox Sense* of the *Trinity*, are not to be esteemed *Christians*, because they cannot believe that which they have not considered, and which is made an *essential part* of *Christianity*. So that according to these *Persons* Notion, *Christian Communion* is confined to a very *narrow Compass*; for what with the *variety* of *Explications*, and the *Multitude* of *Ignorant People*, there's scarce *One* in a *Hundred*, to speak modestly, that profess a *Trinity* in the *Orthodox Sense*. And I will be bold to say, could we come to know the *Sentiments* of each of these *Persons*, who make so great a *Noise* against the *Heresy* of *M. C.* the greatest part would be found *Hereticks*, or at least no *Christians* being either erroneous or ignorant in this Matter.

If then the *Fundamentum* of the *Christian Doctrine* consist in the belief of the *Unity* of the *three Divine Persons*, he that gives his real and unfeigned assent, to the being of *God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost*, and believes that *these three are One*, or the *Trinity in Unity*, as *M. C.* doth, allows the *Article* of the *Trinity* in the *Substance* of it, as he that assents to the *Existence* and *Immortality* of the *Soul*, *fundamentally* grants the *Article* it self, though he be ignorant of its *Substance*, or denies it to be *Immaterial*. And so again, he that believes that *Christ is Emanuel*, and owns his *Regal, Sacerdotal* and *Prophetical Offices*, believes the *Christian*

Doctrine

Doctrine relating to the Person of our Blessed Lord in the Substance of it, and as much as the Scripture explicitly requires.

These are some of the Reasons, wherefore I take *M.C.* to be Sound and Christian in the main and substantial Parts of the Orthodox Faith, relating to the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and the Person and Offices of our Blessed Lord, viz. that he firmly believes the Unity of the Divine Persons, and that Christ is Emanuel, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the World. And let me add farther, that thereby he doth implicitly allow him God in the Orthodox Sense, because those Denominations imply as much, though he does not apprehend it, as he that allows the Existence of God doth implicitly grant, he is a Being Infinite and Immense in all his Attributes. So that I do not see but *M. C.* is full out as excusable, as those who profess to own explicitly the Article of the Blessed Trinity, but subvert and destroy the Notion of it, by espousing some erroneous and heretical Explication or other, as 'tis too scandalously evident, Dr. Sherlock, Mr. Hov, and a Multitude of others do.

But the *Protesting Party*, for so the *Adversaries* of *M.C.* calls themselves, have another Charge against him. They say * this

* A Pamphlet lately sent abroad to make Profelytes.

Notion of *M. C's.* is the Consequence of another of his Errours, namely, that God is a limited Being. I do not intend to justify this Notion; nor do I believe *M. C.* holds it. If he does I am sure it is, in the Consequence of it, a contradiction to the Being of God, (according to the best Notions we can have of it) which he firmly believes notwithstanding, so that his *Heterodoxy* and *Contradiction*, results from his own *Weakness* and *Inaptitude* of *Apprehension*. And if he is not able to form an Idea of Substance abstracted from Matter and Form, suppose him to be acquainted with any but gross and material Conceptions

ceptions of Things, I don't conceive he is presently to be given up to Satan. Those that Anathematize him for it, in effect tell us, they do it, because he wants a Soul of as large a Size and Dimention as theirs, and cannot apprehend what they are able to do ! These are severe Lines, and too much favour of a *Persecuting Spirit*. Will they endeavour to constrain Men to believe what they want Intellects for, and can they hope to succeed ? Has *God* deny'd *Ability*, and will they pretend to infuse it ? Or must Men believe so, because they do ? Was not this their own Grievance and Oppression in the late Times, and can they so soon forget it themselves, as to become the very Instruments of Persecution.

Had I nothing to offer to move my Brethren to Moderation in the Case of *M. C.* but his spotless *Conversation*, which hath so conspicuously appear'd and run through the whole Vein and Course of his *Christian Pilgrimage*, as not only to gain him the Love, Respect and Admiration of all his Friends, but also extort Approbation and Applause from the worst of Men, and his most malicious and inveterate Enemies, this alone were enough to oblige the sincere lovers of Piety and Godliness ; to deal with him very tenderly, and in a Spirit of Love and Christianity, to endeavour to recover him of his Mistakes, which, in Truth, I think they are, tho' not dangerous, nor destructive to Religion : And yet, if I may venture beyond what the Scripture explicitly affirms, I conclude by deductions from several Places of it, that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* are essentially One, however I dare not impose it on other Men, nor make it the Bounds of *Communion* ; for I know no *Divine Warrant*, so to do, but had rather confine my self to the Belief of their *Unity*, which is expressely delivered in *Scripture*.

But they cry Blasphemy, Blasphemy, his Notion is intolerable ! Why Sirs, what's come to you ? Are you frightened at the Blasphemy of *M. C.* and could so long bear with the *Blasphemy* of *J. T's*. Notion, which in the Consequence of it makes *God* the Author of *Sin*, and destroys his *Attributes* of *Mercy* and *Justice*, by determining all the *Actions* of Men, whither *Good* or *Evil*, and by *Electing* and *Reprobating* them without *Consideration* of either.

But wherein pray does *M. C.* Blaspheme ? Why in that he makes *Jesus Christ* to be no more then a Creature ; and if he performs (say they) Acts of Divine Worship in his Name, then he is an Idolater too. If I understand *M. C's*. Notion, and I think I have more reason to do it than any of them, having had more Opportunity : It is a false Charge to say that he makes *Christ* to be no more than a Creature only : for he believes that he participates both of the Divine and Human Natures. But perhaps these Zealots know not the difference betwixt Nature and Substance. If they do not, I think they are not competent Judges in the Case ; if they do, I think their Consciences were none of the tenderest, that could so misrepresent him.

As for their Reasons by which they pretend to prove their Charge, they are just like themselves, as Childish as old Father *M.* their President. It does not follow that *M. C.* holds *Christ* to be but a meer Man, because *M. C.* in a Letter to *J. W.* calls those Things precious Truths, for which *J. W.* had been dealt with ; for those Words might not relate to every part of *J. W's*. Opinion ; but only to that wherein he agreed with *M. C.* nor indeed could he allow them so to be, without a Contradiction to his Notion of *Christ's* Nature, which is a strong Presumption he did not. Nor does it follow, because the *Assembly* did neither compel *M. C.* to clear himself, nor put *Amery* upon the Proof of his Assertion, that the *God* and

C

Christ

Christ which *M. C.* Worships were none of his.

Should this protesting Parties *Packet* fall into the Hands of Strangers to those Affairs, they would be apt to conclude these Persons must needs be very strict in their Discipline respecting *Morality*, and the *Practical* parts of *Religion*, who appear so very Hot and Zealous for the *Theory* and *Notion* of it. But alas they would be greatly mistaken, and have cause to bless themselves when they come to be acquainted, that notwithstanding these Men exclaim against the general Assembly, as conniving at, countenancing and abetting the Error of *M. C.* because they are of a Christian Spirit, and will not judge and condemn their Brethren, who differ from them in some *Speculative Notions*, so that they do not embrace *Those* that are *repugnant* and *destructive* to the *life* and *practice* of *Christianity*, yet they themselves have received into their Association and Communion, a Person accused of a most scandalous and immoral Conversation. As of common and habitual Drunkenness; of attempting to force a civil and modest Woman at *Hygate*, in the presence of two or three Persons, and on the Bed of his sick Patient too: He made her Face to ware the Marks of his Displeasure several Days afterwards, for resisting his Lust, nay was like to have ended her Days, had not a Man been called to her Rescue; of essaying to handle a Gentlewoman belonging to a certain Society of Christians in *Moor-fields* in a manner not fit to be mentioned, but her Modesty forbad the libidinous Design of lacivious Toying; of being brought before a Justice of Peace in a very drunken Condition, who inform'd a Christian Friend of the Matter, and that he nautiously savour'd of over much Drinking; of being found in a publick House by a Woman, a very good Friend of his, greatly disordered with Drink, whom he grossly abused with beastly Language; of frequenting the Company of lewd Women, particularly being left in a Tavern by a Miss of the Town,

rifled

rified of his *Silverheaded Cane*, and Mony ; the occasion of being discovered, for sensible of his Condition he fram'd an Invention to bear him in Countenance, but his old Master left him in the lurch, and his Crochet fail'd ; The dull Soul of a Vintner knew no reason but Justice *Underhill* should pay his Score as well as another Man. Of Iacivious Actions, *turbidus dictu*, to a Female Patient in *Cloth-fair*. The greatest part of these Things, he hath been actually convicted of, and dealt with for, at sundry Times, by a *Church of Christ in Barbican*, so that as he has been cast off, more than once he hath been received upon pretence of Repentance and Humiliation. There are abundance of other Matters I forbear to exhibit against him, but may, and prove them too if occasion serves, and he have the Courage to require it.

But beside all these he was impleaded at the Bar of the general Assembly, (to the certain Knowledge of these Protestors, and at the very time too they received him,) of willful Lying, immoderate Drinking, and being taken in the Company of a common Slut. The first of these is recorded in the *Church Book*, and the latter in the Joarnals of *Sir Edward Clark*, who was *Lord Mayor* elect at that time, The Copy take as follows,

O^r Feb. 20. 1695.

Ann Bird Alias Graham was brought before Sir Edward Clark, by Mr. Chappel a Constable, on suspicion of being a lewd Person, taken in the Company of — Russell, whom she had pickt up ; she would give no account of her self, she was committed to Wood-street Counter. Mr. Russell Professor of Physick in Barbican was the same Day convicted of Drunkenness upon Oath.

Could any one have thought now, this Man would have had the Confidence to insinuate to the World in a Pamphlet published 1698. that the Church of *Goswell-street* (because forsooth they admonished him to re-

turn to his *Communion*, i. e. they meant, to make Application for it, that so they might the better call him to Account) had nothing against him ; much less that the whole *Body of Protestors*, who pretend in their late *Packet* to be mighty zealous and tender of *God's Name* and *Honour*, would admit a Man under such black and scandalous *Characters* into their *Society*, and confer on him too, the honour of Messenger and Elder. But above all who can account for their refusal to compel him, when he deny'd with scorn and contempt, to clear himself of these Charges, under the pretence they had not to do with him, being requir'd to do it by the general Assembly ?

'Tis manifest the *General Assembly*, behaved themselves much like Christians in the Case ; They would not so much as receive the Charge, till he was acquainted there was Matters against him, and desir'd to be there to hear them and defend himself, but this, as you have heard, he contemptuously rejected ; Then they made their Application to the Party, desiring some judicious *Persons* on each side might be deputed to hear and consider the Charges, and to remove all appearance or suspicion of Partiality, it was proposed they should be Country Men, but they did not please neither ; then the *General Assembly* thought themselves obliged to hear and determine the Matter, and as the Result of all drew up this Letter,

The *General Assembly* of Messengers, Elders, and Brethren, meeting in Goswel-street, &c. unto our Disfenting Brethren at White's-Ally, &c.

Beloved Brethren,

For as much as ——— William Russel, a Member of your Society by the Testimony of several credible Witnesses is proved in our Assembly to be guilty of several, and great Immoralities, We have thought meet, to acquaint you therewith, and do earnestly desire you speedily to admonish him thereof, and to suspend him from exercising

any Ministerial Gift in the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also further to deal with him as God's Word directs in such Cases,

Subscribed in the Name, and by the Order of the *Assembly*, By us,

Jo. Amory,
Tho. Bowes.

After all this, the *Party* pretended to take Cognisance of the Matter, and selected a *Person* or two, that might be for the purpose, I will not say it was done by Partiality of the whole, rather of particular *Persons*, willing to respect and favour their own *Image* in whomsoever they found it, interpos'd, and sway'd by their Authority in the Case. The management of these *delegated Persons* plainly discover'd a Design of clearing him right or wrong; for instead of applying themselves to the *Assembly*, which had made it their Business to enquire into the Matter, to examine the Witnesses, and were capable to prove the Charge upon *Oath*, away they go to the *Tavern*, where 'twas reported he was taken, which they took to be the best game they could play, for they wisely considered how very unlikely it was that the *Vintner* would impeach his Customers, and make himself obnoxious to the *Law*. Well, here, they say, they were assured their Friend *William Russel* had, not been within that Door (tho' by the way there are of the same *Tavern* in being, will testify he was Drunk if any Man ever was) this they thought was sufficient to clear up his Innocency, and therefore away they come and make their Report where? to the *General Assembly*? No, no, that I told you before they refused to do, where then? To their own *Assembly*? no, not to them neither, but to a Convention of *Russel's* own Creatures, that were come together to stifle the Matter, under the pretence of doing Justice; these were the only Persons he would be accountable to. They sent to the *Church* indeed at

Goswel-

Goswel-street to acquaint them, if any body had ought to say against *W. Russel* they should attend the *Church*, of *Dean-street*, Alias *Russel* and his *Schismatics*. A likely matter truly, that any, unless they were besotted, should so far justify the Schism as to own them a *Church*, or make them Judges in their own Case. All which is a plain evidence to me that they had no mind the Cause should come to the light of the Sun. I am sure, this very Man and his Friends deny'd Mr. *Colling's* request on the same score, viz. They would not suffer the *Church* at *White's-Ally* to appoint any Persons to confer with those that went from them, because that would be to acknowledge them a *Church*, and hence let them be judged out of their own Mouths; but to return, The Report being made, he is quited of the Charge, *nemine contra dicente*, a sweet harmony among a company of *Schismatics*. I fancy it would have been a pleasant Jest to have heard him pronounced *Innocent*. Could they say, I wonder, because the *Vintner* told them he was not within his *Doors*, that he was not *Drunk*, nor in the Company of a *Gilt*, nor guilty of lying? nor of all the other things the *general Assembly* had found him guilty of and charged him with. Or did the *Vintner's* Story invalidate the *deposition* made in the affirmative? The power of *Dean-street* Logick!

But they endeavour to convert his drunkenness into a Fit. A Fit I verily believe it was, but not such a Fit as they pretend to, but such a one as Mr. *Greenwood*, that then was one of the *schismatical* Members told a Friend of mine he saw him in, and since he was a Preacher at *Dean-street* too, viz. so Drunk, that he was asham'd to see him, and so offensive with the scent of strong Liquors that he could not do his spiritual Guide the Service, as to guide and assist the Carnal Beast out of the Coach, which had whirled the Swine to his Stie: I don't say these are his very Words, but the Substance of them, as my Friend is ready to attest upon Oath, when he has a call to it.

Had it been such a Fit as they pretend to, a certain Gentle

Gentleman, whom I forbear to mention at present would not have informed the Justices Clark, that he saw what Liquor he drank, nor can it be thought his own Wife would have paid five Shillings for it the next Morning to the *Beadle*, ordered to receive it for the use of the Poor, according to Act of Parliament provided in such Case.

By the pretence of a Fit, they hope to extenuate his being in Company with that lewd Woman; they say *She* and her *Bullies* pickt him up for a Prize: If they pickt him up before he was in the Fit they talk of, how doth that lessen his Guilt?

If afterwards, I think 'twas very Impracticable to sieze upon a Man in so profound a *Paroxysm*, as he and they pretend, that he could neither go nor stand, and in the Street too, where all Passengers could not but be witnesses of the Violence offer'd him, and fear some Tragical Action wou'd ensue. But why should I insist upon these Circumstances, when the Matter relating to his being drunk, is attested upon Oath, than which I know no better Conviction?

And as to the certainty of his being in her Company some hours before they were siezed in the Coach by Mr. *Chappel*, and consequently a considerable time before it can be pretended he was in a Fit, there needs no more than the following Confession, and Attestation of two Persons, who were Eye-Witnesses, and Parties concerned in the Business, from first to last, as it is just now taken from their own Mouth, by several credible Persons.

They say, As *Ann Graham*, and several of her *Companions* were going from a certain Tavern on *Snow-Hill*, they were met by Mr. *Russel*, as he appeared to be afterwards, who came up to her, endeavoured to scrape Acquaintance, calling her *Betty*, and invited her to drink a Glass of Wine with him, but not being accustomed to the Gilting Trade, she was not so compliant as the Doctor expected, which made him

him say he wondered at her Shiness, however since his *Coin* was the thing she wanted, she accepted his offer, went with him into a Tavern not far from *Ludgate*, where he gave her half a Guiney, to prostrate her Body; but that it seems was not enough to please the Gentlewoman, wherefore he promised more after she should have satisfied his Lust, but that not satisfying neither, and her Husband with other of her Gang waiting her Return, she slipt from him out of a Back-door, and was pursued so close by the Tipsy, blundering Doctor, that he overtook her near *Ludgate*, and thus accosted her: *Have I found you? I must have my money again*; but she was not willing to that, and demanded of him wherefore he gave it her, which so exasperated him, that he laid Hands upon her; and threatened to take away her Gown, which unpinn'd in the Scuffle. This violence raised the Mob, and obliged her to call a Coach for Sanctuary, into which for Company the Doctor crouded, resolving not to leave her so; but they were soon after stopped by Mr. *Chapple*, and had before Sir *Edward Clark*, as above.

And, not to forget another very remarkable Exploit of this Man, I must let you know, That he pickt up another Man's Wife in the Street, and was obliged by her Husband to make satisfaction.

But notwithstanding all these Crimes, none was thought so fit as *W. Russel* to hear and determine the Case of *J. T.* who was lately accused of schismatizing, and uncleanness with lewd Women. *Thrax ad Thrax compositus*; one would wonder what they could expect to make him a Judge in this Case, which was so much his own; that he could not condemn it, without making a Rod for his own Back; but indeed it fell out otherwise than a body would have thought; he brought him in Guilty, the better, 'tis like, to cover his own Hypocrisy.

These are the two *Men*, and these their *Characters*; mighty Sticklers against *M. C.* and great Pretenders

to Religion, but in reality *practical Atheists*. These are the Men, who under the pretence of *Religious Zeal*, pronounce *M. C.* a Person not to be communicated with, and damn him for a cursed *Heretick*, because, forsooth, he is not *Orthodox*, as they call it, in the Doctrine of the Trinity ; and the mean time themselves deny the very Being of *God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, by their wicked and ungodly Practices. *Clodius accusat machos, Catalina Cethegam.*

The Matters of Fact, (to use their own Words, *mutatis mutandis*, as I find them in their late Pamphlet) being so evident that they cannot be denied, 'tis Matter of Wonder how any that are sound in the Faith, can own such a Party of Men as these are, for they are justly chargeable with conniving at, aiding and abetting Persons guilty of these wicked Crimes.

And therefore under the specious pretences of opposing *Heresy*, for these Men to embrace and receive into their Communion, and to deligate as a Messenger of the Gospel, a Person guilty of unparalel'd Immorality, is certainly the greatest Prejudice that can be done to the Interest of *Christ*, which loudly calls for every one that loves the *Lord Jesus Christ* in sincerity to bear their Testimony against them.

Hearken therefore, Beloved Brethren, to the Call of *God*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. *Wherefore come out from amongst them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you :* for 'tis impossible to have Communion with such Men, who are guilty of Lying, Drunkenness, and Debauchery, but you must needs be defiled.

But they say, their Friend *Russel* is reformed, and is really become a new Creature. So they said formerly after he was dealt with at *Barbican*. Ay, but now denies himself, they say, the comfort of strong Liquor, which should make his Heart glad in his old Age, this too is but the old Story, that we had be-

fore *ad nauseam usque*. Besides 'tis but the *Omen* of a Carnal *Mortification*; so that I cannot tell how to believe there is any real Change, tho' I sincerely profess, I should be very glad if there were, for I have not the least personal Grudg against the Man, but wish him as well as my own Soul; and therefore I promise, to enquire about it, and if Mr. *H. Collins* can say he treated him at *White's-Ally* with a moderate and Christian Spirit, and if the Authors of the *Portsmouth Disputation* can pronounce him a Man of Truth and Honesty, I will certainly believe he is Reformed in a great Measure.

FINIS.

Adver.

Advertisement.

I am desired by a Friend informed of this Paper's coming abroad, and of Mr. Russel's design to publish speedily a Vindication of his Account of the Portsmouth Disputation, to acquaint the Reader, there is a Book preparing for the Press, which is to bear the Title of Animadversions on the Impartial Account, and Dialogue of the Portsmouth Dispute, &c. In which also the Arguments, and Objections of the most eminent Assertors of Infant Baptism will be examined, both, as they relate to the Subjects of it, and to the Mode of Administration; The thing in Controversy betwixt us inquired into, and the Question truly stated, which hath been generally mistaken by the Padobaptists, and their Grounds for Infant Baptism, proved to evert and destroy the Foundation of the Protestant Religion in general, and Separation from the National Church in particular; And Believers Baptism defended by Topicks not subject to the common and popular Objections, &c. By Persons altogether unwilling to let the Cause depend on the Management of the Cambridge Doctor. But the time of its Publication cannot be set, it may be half a Year or more.

